

CHALLENGE



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Anti-Fascist Fighters Defy College Bosses' Attack



NEW YORK CITY, November 8 — Thirty people gathered in the frigid cold morning to protest the disciplinary hearing for Taffy and Khalil, two students suspended for rallying against the closing of the Morales/Shakur Center at City College of the City University of New York (CUNY). After the students refused to be bought out by the administration, their hearing was postponed to 9 a.m. Friday, November 15. A rally will be held in front of the City College North Academic Center.

This struggle began October 21, when students and faculty demonstrated against the City College administration for shutting down the student center with no notice. In fact, the shutdown was aimed at the growing fightbacks that began earlier this semester. These protests targeted the CUNY presence of racist General David Petraeus and the Reserve Officer Training Corps [see CHALLENGE 11/13].

Our fight is anti-racist because Petraeus represents the U.S. bosses' imperialist war on workers in the Middle East and South Asia. City College sits in Harlem, one of the most

oppressed communities in the country. It's also a place where Petraeus and ROTC hope to recruit more black officers for their war machine. Unity with Harlem's workers would strengthen our anti-racist fight.

Taffy and Khalil are now barred from setting foot on campus, but they are neither silenced nor intimidated. Taffy thanked the cops and administration for their help in growing the movement. He was referring to the collective anger that results when one of our students is attacked. Instead of scaring us, the attack has emboldened us.

What Fascism Looks Like

Militancy was evident both inside and outside the hearing. Although fifteen people at a time were supposed to be allowed in, the cops barred the door. They shunted the crowd behind the NAC building, which effectively hid the protesters from the main entrances. One PL'er yelled at the cops, "This is what fascism looks like!"

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Solidarity from Haiti:

'Comrades, We Are a Single Class'

Comrades,

The capitalist system, aware of its decline, knowing that even the most apathetic are losing confidence in its false promises, is growing fearful behind its façade of humanitarianism. The workers, employed and unemployed, are more and more grasping the fact that it is the bourgeois system responsible for the poverty, the misery, and wars that ravage the world. They understand too that all the wars in the world today are the consequence of the capitalists' greed.

This growing awareness among international working people of the imperialists' lies is shaping anti-capitalist organizing. This is true even where capitalism has entrenched its culture of individualism, racism, and all their other means of dividing and alienating us. This is why workers, the unemployed, and peasants, are in the process of organizing themselves against capitalism, or at least against its oppression and exploitation. Capitalism has deceived and disappointed the human race. To stay in command, and to continue their domination, the exploiting bourgeois criminals take up arms. They have used their force to hold down the whole working class, and black workers in particular.

Everywhere War, War Everywhere!

In Haiti, we live daily with the sound of shots from the machine guns of MINUSTAH [troops of the United Nations "peacekeepers" in Haiti] and the gangsters in the Haitian armed forces. We are oppressed and "downpressed," and we struggle against the pressure! Our rallies, our non-violent marches and our sit-ins are subject to armed attacks. That is the only way these bourgeois cowards know how to respond to our just and well-organized struggles. It's always tear gas, rubber bullets, and heavy weapons, to try to put down our movements against the inhuman actions of the system.

We here clearly understand what it is that you, CUNY students, are up against in this struggle, our struggle, the class struggle. That is precisely the struggle we must keep on waging. Everywhere, the oppressed must fight with passion against the militarization of society. We fight against war, we fight against imperialism. Resist! Keep going! Victory will be ours.

Right now, we in Haiti are living through tough times, as fascism has our campuses in its cross-hairs. Some penniless students are co-opted and turned into strong-arm agents of the system. We keep our struggle going, nevertheless; there are strikes which create an alliance of teachers and students. When weapons no longer scare us, we will be closer to victory.

We are, in all regions, a single class, in battle against a barbarous system. Faced with this situation, we must carry on the class struggle; and, as an exploited and oppressed class, we will not stop along the way until we win the final victory. Comrades, you are not alone; if not for the bosses' borders we too would be on the front lines at CUNY. One day, we will all be together everywhere in our world. Every struggle is a victory and every victory counts: forward march! You are not alone, comrades.

*Comrades from Haiti united in struggle,
October 26, 2013.*

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

★Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

★Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today’s world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

★Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world’s workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

★While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

★Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society’s benefits and burdens.

★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

★Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

★Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

★Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion’s false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

★Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP’s criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a “following” around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual’s writing of an article.

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Editorial

U.S. Warmakers Hit Roadblock from Germany, Japan

U.S. capitalists have a growing crisis on their hands. As they prepare for a wider global conflict with their imperialist rivals, they’re having trouble forging the coalition they need. This process will have unpredictable twists and turns. What’s clear is that the U.S. is in sharp economic decline and increasingly unable to go it alone in paying for their war machine.

Of the nations Washington counts on as strategic bases of operation, sources of troops and financial backers, two key ones are balking. The German rulers’ public outrage at U.S. phone tapping reflects their reluctance to toe the U.S. bosses’ line, economically or militarily. Some important Japanese capitalists, meanwhile, aren’t ready to abandon the post-World War II pacifist edicts (forced into the Japanese constitution by the U.S.) that helped enrich them. The prohibition of a standing army boosted the profit margin for Japanese corporations.

These edicts could change, however. Capitalism is a dictatorship of the ruling class. Capitalists use the government to maintain their profit system. They use war to resolve their conflicts with other capitalists. The bosses’ sole interest in the working class is to exploit labor for profit — and to use workers’ sons and daughters to fight and die in inter-imperialist wars. The rulers will alter or nullify any laws that limit their ability to pursue their profit goals.

We, the international working class, need to smash this bosses’ dictatorship. We need to establish a workers’ dictatorship that represents our class interests and eliminates the profit system and all its evils: unemployment, racism, sexism, mass poverty and war.

German Bosses Won’t Bow to U.S. Demands

On November 4, Paul Krugman, a liberal economist at the New York Times, wrote, “German officials are furious at America, and not just because of the business about Angela Merkel’s cell phone. What has them enraged now is...a U.S. Treasury report. [It] argues that Germany’s huge surplus on current account — a broad measure of the trade balance — is harmful, creating ‘a deflationary bias for the euro area, as well as for the world economy.’” Krugman went on to attack Germany’s relentless impoverishment of Eurozone U.S. allies and NATO members like Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal.

A day later, the Times further exposed the root of the Obama-Merkel rift. In the eyes of U.S. rulers, Berlin is withholding its military potential from the cause of U.S. imperialism. As Jochen Bittner, editor at the pro-U.S. Die Zeit, complained in an op-ed piece:

Germany is Europe’s unrivaled superpower, its largest economy and its most powerful political force. And yet if its response to recent global crises, and the general attitude of its leaders and citizens, are any indication, there appears to be nothing that will get the German government to consider military intervention.

This attitude was apparent in the German population’s overwhelming opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq. But U.S. capitalists worry most about Germany’s contribution in future global crises. Germany spends only 1.4 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on its military. The U.S. tops the world by devoting 4.8 percent to its war machine. Resurgent rival Russia is close behind at 4.4 percent. China invests 2 percent of its GDP in its armed forces, but that figure underplays the true scope of its war preparations:

“The Chinese military budget, at official exchange rates, is one-seventh that of the United States. But on a more appropriate purchasing power parity (PPP) basis, the Chinese military expenditure is about \$500 billion, about three-quarters that of the United States” (Global Security).

U.S. Wants Japan on War Footing

Meanwhile, President Obama is desperately trying to get Japan — the world’s third largest economy — to increase its measly 1 percent military outlay by reversing the pacifist Article 9 of its constitution. It states, “The Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained.”

This edict was imposed in 1947 to prevent a repeat of the massive Asian war launched by Japan prior to World War II, which threatened U.S. supremacy in the Pacific. But today the U.S. capitalists have more pressing concerns with a new emerging superpower, namely China. Obama and the bosses he represents are tilting toward Asia to meet this threat. At the same time, Japan is embroiled in a struggle with China

over energy resources recently discovered in the seas that lie between them.

Under circumstances like these, the bosses simply change the rules. Ann Wright, former U.S. Army officer and diplomat, writes in Global Research (11/8/13):

On October 3, 2013, the United States and Japan issued a “Joint Statement of the Security Consultative Committee: Toward a More Robust Alliance and Greater Shared Responsibilities.” In the document, the United States “welcomes” the [Japanese Prime Minister] Abe government’s “re-examining the legal basis for its security including the matter of exercising its right of collective self-defense....”

In other words, they are seeking a way to eliminate Article 9 and allow Japan to participate in wars of aggression. As a side benefit for U.S. rulers, Japan would be forced to pay for a portion of U.S. military outlays in Japan and Okinawa.

But major Japanese capitalists oppose Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s push for “proactive pacifism,” his euphemism for remilitarization. A November 8 editorial in the Japan Times warns:

Through the exercise of the right to collective self-defense “proactive pacifism” could eventually lead to deployment of the Self-Defense Forces overseas on armed military missions. In short, if implemented Mr. Abe’s policy of “proactive pacifism” will destroy the Constitution’s war-renouncing principle and Japan’s traditional “defense-only defense” posture [where military force can be used only internally or if Japan is attacked]. Thus the prime minister’s push for “proactive pacifism” must be stopped.

Japan Times is wholly owned by Nifco, Inc., the largest supplier of plastic parts for Japan’s worldwide automotive industry. The company’s profits are much larger when not being taxed to finance a world-class military apparatus.

U.S. Post-WWII Policies Backfire?

Shortly after World War II, the triumphant U.S. rulers conducted highly publicized war crimes trials in Nuremberg and Tokyo. Then they restored their fascist former enemies to political and economic power. They re-Nazified Germany to counter the pro-working class Soviet and Chinese movements of the postwar era. But the U.S. refused to restore military power to the vanquished.

U.S. planners like John J. McCloy, chairman of Rockefeller’s Chase Manhattan Bank and the Council on Foreign Relations, was installed as High Commissioner of Germany, essentially its lord and master. At that point the U.S. capitalists owned half the world’s manufacturing capacity. They thought they could maintain sole military control of Germany and Japan. And so they did for decades, with hundreds of thousands of GIs stationed in the two countries, even at the height of the Vietnam War.

But with their vital interests now threatened in the Middle East and elsewhere, the U.S. imperialists’ huge military outlays are straining their capacity. They need their longtime protectorates to chip in as armed protectors of their global empire. The chief U.S. rivals are China and Russia, two former workers’ states that are now state capitalist. By using their governments to directly exploit their working classes, these rivals threaten U.S. rulers’ world domination.

Rebellion Good, Communist Revolution Crucial

What all the ruling classes fear is how workers will react to their murderous plans. Masses in the European Union are rebelling against the austerity imposed by German bosses. Suffering the worst unemployment since the Great Depression, demonstrators are taking to the streets in Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal. They are fighting the French bosses’ pension and job cuts and the rise of the new Nazis in Germany and Greece.

In China, hundreds of rebellions are underway to oppose the removal of hundreds of millions of peasants from the land and into \$2-a-day urban sweatshops and other menial labor. Tens of thousands have demonstrated and fought the cops in Brazil, protesting the rulers’ extravagant spending on the World Cup and the Olympics while transportation fares are raised, wages are cut and food prices climb. Who can predict when U.S. workers will say they’ve had enough of mass racist unemployment? When they’ll fight back against their impoverishment? When they’ll refuse to provide the cannon fodder for the U.S. bosses’ war machine?

Spontaneous rebellion is a positive expression of workers’ anger. But it can never end the exploitation of capitalism. We need a working class led by a mass communist party to smash the state power of the world’s capitalist classes—and to replace it with a workers’ dictatorship.☸

March vs. Cuts in Jobs, Food Stamps, Legal Services

NEWARK, NJ, November 1 — As capitalism's economic crisis deepens, sparks of working-class resistance continue to flare up internationally. More workers search for leadership for this fightback. Some see the capitalist system behind the attacks. They're eager to learn how our class can shape our collective future. PLP needs to be in these struggles, where these fighters will see the truth of our politics.

Legal services workers here are joining in this fight. Today, 50 people, including about 20 legal workers and clients, a vanload of people from a local soup kitchen, community militants, students and other workers marched against the five percent cut in Food Stamps, the continued underfunding of free legal services for the unemployed, and the very low-wage workers, and mass racist unemployment in cities like Newark. The marchers were both united and militant.

Even before the devastating funding cuts of the last five years, inflation has halved the real value of federal government grants to Legal Services. Then the 2007–2008 housing crash killed the main source of funds from property taxes, followed by the slashing of first state and now federal monies.

Hundreds of Legal Services workers statewide have been laid off or forced out. The workloads of those who remain have increased. Wages have been cut. At one office, a four-day week was recently instituted, with total wage and benefit cuts there since 2008 now reaching 40%.

Worse, Legal Services clients have seen their advocates often unable to assist them with legal problems dealing with basic survival — evictions, foreclosures, bankruptcies, unemployment appeals and welfare fair hearings, just to name a few.

The attacks initiated by the Clinton-Republican 1997 welfare reform have not stopped. Neither Obama nor any national politician supported an extension of the tiny 2009 Food Stamp increase. That "raise" followed

mass anger against the bankers' role in the crash of 2007–8, and has now been eliminated.

U.S. rulers need to cut so-called safety-net programs to build a war chest for future wars against their imperialist rivals. Their politicians are sharpening their knives for more cuts to Food Stamps, ranging from \$4 billion to \$40 billion over the next decade.

A local Legal Services union-formed action committee planned and led today's march. That committee led an 18-month campaign, gathering nearly 2,000 signatures on a petition demanding restoration of state Legal Services funding. Those petitions were delivered to Governor Christie in June. Before the march, that committee was expanded to include non-union staff and clients. That decision proved to be crucial to the worker-client unity expressed at the march.

Along the way, the marchers stopped at a local Bank of America, Newark City Hall and the state unemployment office. Speakers included a Legal Services worker, a statewide community action group and several soup kitchen clients. The clients' stories of hunger, homelessness and being turned away by government agencies — supposedly set up to help people — were both heart-breaking and infuriating. At the unemployment office we loudly chanted "Jobs yes, racism no! Food Stamp cuts have got to go!"

During the march, PLP members and friends distributed 175 copies of CHALLENGE. A local union and community militant gave the wrap-up speech at the Federal Building, just as Homeland Security cops were trying to shut down the rally. He pointed to mass racist unemployment as the source of poverty, homelessness, hunger, substance abuse and other social consequences. He targeted the capitalist drive for maximum profits as inevitably leading to the crises being experienced worldwide today.

In contrast to prior speakers, who attacked individual politicians like Christie or Newark Mayor Corey

U.S. rulers need to cut so-called safety-net programs to build a war chest for future wars against their imperialist rivals. Their politicians are sharpening their knives for more cuts to Food Stamps, ranging from \$4 billion to \$40 billion over the next decade.

Booker, this speaker made it clear that unemployment and poverty are a product of this economic system.

He asked the crowd what kind of world we would want our children to grow up in. On one side, he posed the dictatorship of the .01 percent, using their vast capital to control the government, grinding down the world's working class to lower levels of existence; on the other side, an anti-racist world based on equality where workers as a class run our lives for the good of society as a whole.

The speaker declared this march was just the beginning, and challenged the crowd to commit themselves to this last vision of a new society. A number of marchers loudly cheered this call.

The future is bright for those who labor and struggle to make ends meet. PLP's aim is to lead a revolution for communism to bring about that world, where poverty, unemployment, racism and sexism will be a distant memory.✪

Philippines, Bangladesh: Capitalism Is the Disaster

For five days and counting....

Ten thousand workers in the Philippines are expected to be among the dead in just one city, with hundreds of thousands left homeless by a fierce typhoon bringing winds of over 200 miles per hour. NGOs are flooding the affected region, but if this is a repeat of the recent experience in Haiti — after the devastating 2010 earthquake — most of the aid promised by the big imperialist countries will not be delivered, and what is delivered will mostly be spent in the donor countries.

Young soldiers carrying M-16 assault rifles were sent by the government to "restore order," accusing angry hungry people of "hijacking" relief vehicles. Food and water are slow to be distributed and dead bodies are piling up, endangering public health.

The "super typhoon" was known to be coming, but evacuation was mismanaged because the government was calling it a "storm warning" instead of a "tsunami" — a word which carries much more significance in the area.

Capitalist greed is solely responsible for this unnatural disaster. Storms are increasing in intensity due to global warming, with an 11 percent upsurge expected by the end of this century, causing sea levels to rise. Capitalists don't want to eat into their profits by limiting carbon emissions and other protection for the environment. (Full analysis next issue)✪

DHAKA, BANGLADESH, November 11 — Another one of capitalism's unnatural disasters — extreme poverty and exploitation — drove 30,000 angry garment workers into the streets here in a mass strike that shut over 100 factories. The workers who produce clothing for billion-dollar corporations like Walmart, the Gap and Sears are demanding a 260 percent increase of the \$38 monthly minimum wage to \$100. The government offered \$67 which the bosses rejected as "too high," which government official admit hardly meets a basic diet.

The cops used tear gas and rubber bullets against the workers but the latter fought back, stoning the cops, blocking key highways and roads, smashing vehicles and factory windows.✪



Justice for Kyam Livingston

Condemn NYPD’s Racist Murder



BROOKLYN, NY, October 21 — “Justice for Kyam Livingston — killed in a Brooklyn cell” echoed down the cold, darkening, windswept street outside 120 Schermerhorn St. here today. This is the courthouse that holds the local Central Booking, backing on to the Brooklyn House of Detention. The gathering of more than 120 chanting people was multi-racial, young and old, men and women. Although the street was dark and cold, the fire of the words burned against the walls of Central Booking.

A number of cops stood in front of the courthouse’s wide door as the chants continued. Several speakers talked about Kyam Livingston who had called out for medical attention for over seven hours from her cell. She received none and died there on a bench with only the other detainees to help and comfort her. That’s what gave her mother’s words such strength.

Holding up the urn with Kyam’s ashes, between anguished sobs, she told the story of how her daughter’s cries for help were spurned by the jailers. Kyam’s son also spoke about his growing understanding of the system that could callously do this to his mother. One young man emceed the gathering while two people kept the chants going between speeches.

The first hearing of the case against the City

occurred in federal court earlier in the day. The City outrageously refuses to hand over the surveillance tapes of events in the cell the night Kyam died, or the names of the cops on duty at the jailhouse. Instead they questioned the family about Kyam as a person, as though she was the offending party. The arrogance and callousness of the system becomes more apparent every day.

This is where Kyam’s son learned a lot more about how the working class is officially oppressed. According to the official rules, Kyam should have been given medical attention when she was first in distress. Instead, all she and her cellmates received from the cops was the notice to “shut the f*** up or we’ll lose your paperwork.”

Kyam’s mother could not contain her sorrow. She walked up the steps between the cops and right into the courthouse where everyone could see her from the street. She tightly held the urn with her daughter’s ashes. She then walked out between the security people, went to the microphone and spoke of taking her daughter out of the jail. “Now you’re free,” her mother said. There were few dry eyes among the gathered supporters.

A teacher who works with the Justice for Shantel Davis Committee spoke, linking the system responsible for both deaths. Later another speaker told the group that the “elephant in the room is racism,” and that racism must

Union Retirees Back Protests for Kyam

NEW YORK CITY, October 29 — The retiree association of District Council 37 voted today to support the activities of the Committee for Justice for Kyam Livingston who died in a Brooklyn holding cell on July 21. The association, which represents 50,000 retired NYC government workers, will help circulate the petition seeking Justice for Kyam and will accept contributions for activities backing the aims of that committee.

The retirees voted this support out of an understanding that what happened to Kyam could have happened to many of our members, their children or grandchildren. Our collective experience in the union movement taught us well the lesson that unity of black, Latino and white workers, men and women, is the only way we can move forward. Also, many of us understand that the principled fight against racist police violence is an important way to build real unity.

be fought constantly. He led the chant, “Racism means, fight back!” which everyone took up. Another speaker challenged the security guards standing on the steps to think about what had happened, and about how people are treated inside that building. Other chants and speakers demanded release of the tapes, the cops’ names and for a thorough investigation of conditions inside the jail.

The Justice for Kyam Livingston Committee will continue to be active and hold demonstrations on the 21st of every month, the monthly anniversary of her death. The committee’s growth and those involved are a good sign of people refusing to accept the pat answers that capitalism gives us for the tragedies it causes. The sale of CHALLENGE during this demonstration was another good sign. The struggle may be long, but the goal is our future.☺

Public Health Convention

Attack Racist Bloomberg Award; Expose UN’s Cholera in Haiti

BOSTON, November 6 — “Bloomberg is NO Public Health Hero” was the rallying cry of activists at this year’s meeting of the American Public Health Association (APHA). APHA leadership was giving New York City Mayor Bloomberg the “Legislator of the Year” award, down playing the NYC mayor’s racist stop-and-frisk program targeting hundreds of thousands of young black and Latino men was unimportant, given his anti-smoking, anti-gun and anti-soda stances.

PLP members and friends organized several anti-racist campaigns at this year’s public health meeting, along with the Medical Care Section of APHA, and Radical Public Health students from Chicago informed the 13,000 attendees. They worked with fighters in several APHA Sections to write a formal protest letter to the Executive Board, and distributed over 2,000 leaflets exposing the Board’s decision. Many thanked us and could not believe racist Bloomberg would be given a public health award.

The Black Caucus of Health Workers sponsored a session on Mass Incarceration that drew over 50 people. Students presented data on the full scope of damage by the “War on Drugs” on communities and individuals. This war targets black and Latino men and women with arrests and imprisonment for minor drug possession and non-violent crimes. While government data show that white and black people use and sell drugs at similar rates, the cops arrest and courts convict blacks at a disproportionate rate. In Washington, DC, 90 percent of adults arrested for drug possession are black while they represent less than 50 percent of the residents.

Conviction for drug offenses deprives communities of parents and workers, social support, and partners. Returnees face barriers to housing, jobs, food stamps, and other necessities, keeping the unemployment and homeless rates high among black workers. The APHA journal reported that people on parole lose two years of life for every year in prison, leading many to call this an “early death sentence.”

The ruling class uses this policy to criminalize, pacify, and marginalize a population that has led major rebellions and reform movements in the past. The policy continues the enslavement of black workers that started with slavery and continued with Jim Crow laws. Like stop-and-frisk practices, it increases the stereotypes that black men are all drug dealers who deserve punishment and blame for high unemployment rates, poor graduation rates, and violence. This lies at the base of the racism the capitalists need to deflect anger from their exploitation of all workers.

Speakers analyzed the superprofits the capitalists make off racism and the loss of wages and jobs from privatization of schools, transit and housing. A member of PLP highlighted the fight for jobs at Washington, DC METRO for people returning from prison. Plans for protests, resolutions and sessions at next year’s meeting in New Orleans came out of this intense program.

The theme of this year’s conference was “Think Global, Act Local”. Our continuing fight against cholera in Haiti showed that PLP and our friends go way beyond this sloganeering. We were important in helping organize an extraordinary evening session on Haiti that was

put on by the Black Caucus, anti-cholera campaigners and people from Haiti who are suing the UN to compensate victims and develop clean water systems. Sanitation and mass vaccination against cholera are effective and possible, but the countries that want to profit from Haiti as a mass sweatshop are not interested. Only 1 percent of Haiti’s population has been vaccinated because there is no money to ramp up vaccine production there.

A Center for Disease Control engineer described a “long-term” safe water project but said only about 10 percent of the needed money is in the pipeline. Cost estimates range from \$800 million to \$2 billion, which the UN should pay and pull out its troops. A sharp debate at an earlier session focused on the role of the U.S. in destroying the economy and autonomy of Haiti and allowed a political discussion of the role of imperialism.

Many other activities linked our Party to this mass organization. We presented a poster on “Capitalist Determinants of HIV” which compared a communist approach to public health to the limited programs in the U.S.

A friend chaired the growing Jail and Prison Health Committee within the Medical Care Section. This committee can sponsor events next year and her resolution on Mental Health and Prison can be used in advocating reforms during the year. The traditional Troublemakers Breakfast also drew in new students and APHA members to discuss the role of APHA under capitalism and the need to challenge the system as we build for revolution. On to New Orleans!☺

France: Capitalist Unemployment Spreading



Striking undocumented AF Interlog workers

PARIS, November 6 — A new wave of layoffs has hit France, where official unemployment is 5,473,000 (19.3 percent). Some are due to companies going under in the continuing Great Recession, while others come at profitable companies that want to boost their profits even more. It all underscores the anarchy of capitalism, where capitalists produce goods and services to make a profit — not to satisfy the needs of the working class — while millions suffer from joblessness and privation.

Five Companies Announce Layoffs

Fagor-Brandt, Europe's fifth-largest housing appliances manufacturer, went bankrupt, dumping 5,700 workers worldwide, (1,800 in France, 2,000 in Spain). French union leaders pleaded for a French government bailout of the French part of the company, while throwing Spain's workers into the streets.

The union misleaders follow a nationalist road hoping to win crumbs from "your own government." This is why communists build international unity to fight the bosses and their governments.

Crédit Immobilier de France (CIF), a small bank specializing in home loans is winding down the company, laying off 1,500 while 700 will continue to manage the bank's outstanding loans. CIF could have continued making home loans to workers, but the French Finance Ministry intends to grab at least part of its 2.4 billion euros in capital (US\$3.2 billion) to help the cash-strapped French government pay off its sovereign debt to the world's finance capitalists. Under capitalism, homes for workers are less important than cash for financiers.

The Alstom corporation announced at least 1,300 layoffs, mainly in Europe. The corporation is expected to make a net profit of 361 million euros (US\$487 million) this year.

Telecoms operator Alcatel Lucent announced 10,000 layoffs worldwide, including 881 in France in 2014. More than 900 other jobs in France will be impacted by internal re-organization and the closure of some sites. On October 15, Alcatel Lucent workers demonstrated in Paris, Rennes and Toulouse to protest the planned layoffs. In 2012, the corporation lost 1.3 billion euros net (US\$1.75 billion).

The Kering corporation plans 700 layoffs, 21 percent of the 3,300 workers at its mail order subsidiary, La Redoute, in northern France, in a region already hard-hit by the economic crisis. Kering plans to sell La Redoute, as the down-sizing makes it a more attractive purchase. About 6,000 jobs are linked directly or indirectly to Le Redoute.

In the first half of 2013 Kering's profits rose 582 million euros (US\$785 million). CEO François-Henri Pinault's salary in 2011 was 3,000,000 euros (US\$4,000,000). His father's fortune totals 8.1 billion euros (US\$10.9 billion).

Socialist Government's Capitalist Response to Unemployment

The "lesser evil" Socialist government has three "answers" to rising unemployment: (1) bribe companies into not laying off workers; (2) "disappear" unemployed workers from the statistics; and (3) allow French capitalists to super-exploit workers from other countries under slave-labor conditions. Of course, none of this will solve the problem. As Karl Marx analyzed in "Capital" long ago, capitalism's boom-bust cycle inevitably produces periods of mass unemployment. He demonstrated that even in the boom times capitalism produces the exact amount of unemployment needed to optimize profits.

Disappearing the Unemployed

Meanwhile, the government will be robbing the jobless of unemployment benefits with its "harmonization" of the rules, which includes a detailed list of the documentary evidence a worker must provide to justify missing an appointment or be struck off the rolls. Every month, around 41,000 workers are struck down, 90 percent for missing an appointment.

Super-Exploiting Immigrant Workers

Under European Union regulations, French bosses can pay social security to an immigrant worker's home country (within the EU) at the local rate, which is one-sixth of the French rate. In 2011, French bosses imported an estimated 300,000 immigrant workers from Eastern

International Unity Wins Immigrant Workers' Strike

Thirty-five undocumented, mainly Egyptian workers shut down the AF-Interlog plant, with the active assistance of the other, documented workers. AF-Interlog is a subsidiary of an Italian company, which is itself the subsidiary of an Australian corporation. The workers are immigrants from Italy. AF-Interlog repairs pallets for Coca-Cola and the retail giant Carrefour.

The company ordered the workers not to talk to the trade union steward who helps undocumented workers obtain papers. When they disobeyed, the company told the workers they had to produce papers or they would be sent back to Italy, where they knew they would be laid off.

When the workers struck, the bosses immediately contacted the prefecture (the local representative of the central government), who also sent the workers a letter demanding papers.

The workers held out, forcing the company to fill out paperwork retroactively, and forcing the prefecture to allow the workers to file for documents allowing them to live and work in France.

This inspiring success reveals the power of international unity and organized, combined action. And it points the way to the ultimate struggle: overthrowing both the bosses and their governments through communist revolution, in order to create a society where we all work collectively (without unemployment) to produce what our class needs.

Europe, mainly employed in the building trades, agriculture and transport. These workers are mercilessly exploited by the bosses, some becoming virtual slaves. The bosses withhold a large part of their wages for transport and housing costs, force them to work up to 60 hours a week without paying overtime, provide substandard housing and confiscate their passports.

This cheap, or even slave, labor divides the working class. Unemployed workers are told that "cheap foreign workers are stealing our jobs." This partly explains the election success of the fascist National Front (see CHALLENGE, 11/13). It also drives down wages and benefits for all workers. In addition, the bosses make super-profits on the immigrant workers. The workers' trump card is anti-racist international solidarity and their ability to stop production (see box).☺

Jews, Arabs, Africans Unite: Rip Israeli Rulers' Racist Neglect, Segregation

SOUTH TEL-AVIV, October 13 — Hundreds of workers of various ethnicities — Jews, Palestinians and African refugees — marched in the south of the city against the horrible neglect of their neighborhoods by the racist, capitalist city hall. They called for the dissolution of the "ghettos," for an end to racial segregation and for power for the local residents. This working-class rally came a mere week after a racist march by fascists, also in south Tel-Aviv, against the "infiltrator problem" (what racists call the African refugees, who escaped genocide in Darfur or murderous tyranny in Eritrea.)

While the fascist thugs do the bosses' bidding by dividing workers and blaming the victims for the horrid conditions of the working-class neighborhoods, today the working class fought back and placed the blame on the real culprits: city hall and its capitalist masters. The workers came in high spirits with signs and drums, and the cops didn't dare to obstruct their way. Progressive Labor Party distributed an anti-racist flyer, as well as CHALLENGES in Hebrew, Arabic and English, which were well-received.

The mayors of Tel-Aviv have been neglecting the southern part of the city, which is mostly working-class (both Jewish and Arab), for decades. While fat-cat mayor Ron Huldai authorizes the construction of fancy high-rise towers for the rich, the south suffers from failing infrastructure, bad public transit, pollution and massive crime. The area around the central bus station has a high concentration of drug pushers, striptease halls

and brothels, where, in many cases, human trafficking victims are being exploited. Muggings of workers and rape of working-class women by criminals are commonplace. This has existed for decades, while the cops do nothing. The sewage runs in the streets and rats abound. All of this contrasts to the fancy, northern parts of town, where the mostly Ashkenazi (European Jewish) small-scale bosses and bourgeoisie dwell; there crimes are solved or moved to the south, and infrastructures are good.

In the early 2000s, thousands of workers fleeing East Africa went north to Egypt, where they were murdered by Egyptian soldiers (who, according to testimonies we have heard, get an evening off duty for every refugee they kill). Others are kidnapped by local criminals in Sinai and held for ransom while being tortured. So they flee further north to Israel, where the government intensifies these racist attacks by busing them straight from the border to the already overcrowded working-class neighborhoods of South Tel-Aviv. They rarely get work permits and are forced into the underground low-wage economy.

These refugees work at starvation wages for local contractors, who pay them as little as \$3-\$4.5 USD per hour, about half the minimum wage. They are further exploited by slumlords, who pack ten of them into a tiny apartment at high rent. Survival "crime" is common, as many refugees must steal in order to eat.

But of course the bosses' government blames the refugees! The local fascist politicians accuse them of spreading diseases and crime, call them racist names. Slum residents are being taught by the government to blame the refugees for the neglect of their neighborhoods. But things are changing.

A working-class fighter whom PLP knows and used to hold strong racist ideas, said to us at the demonstration, "it's a shame not many people from the slums come to this kind of demonstrations. It's because of racism." She is beginning to see that racism is the enemy of the working class.

Multi-racial working-class unity is the real way to change how South Tel-Aviv is being neglected by the government of the rich. By building working-class consciousness and eventually, building our revolutionary Party, we stand a chance of turning things upside down. When the communists liberated China 64 years ago this month, they ended slums, freed and rehabilitated the prostitutes, shot the pimps, pushers and slumlords and eliminated opium dens. For three decades they struggled to build a society free from those ills. While their achievements were eventually reversed, we can learn from their experience and build ourselves a new world from the ashes of the old. Join us!☺

Youth Inspired at PL Campus Conference

I've always known I was against capitalism; up until recently I didn't know there was an alternative. I'm grateful to have learned I am not the only one who thinks this way. I'm guilty of accepting the capitalist opinions and views of what communism means. I am excited to have begun my journey in learning the truth. Destroy capitalism before it destroys us!

I've noticed this illusion of powerlessness being promoted amongst today's youth. I want to expose this illusion. I think that's one step toward revolution.

I must say this conference was the proper jolt of political discussion I needed. When I came for the last day and walked through the doors, it was almost like entering a new world. One where I can truly discuss with like-minded, truly progressive individuals, the dangers of capitalism — its racist, sexist vices. I thoroughly enjoyed these talks, where we cut through lies about what this world is and what it can become. It's a shame I will have to depart the conference and return to a world where garbage like Kim Kardashians are regularly promoted and discussed. But at least I was able to escape that reality briefly. And one day, maybe I will for good!

This conference was pretty dope [awesome]. We got into small groups. We ended up just discussing and sharing our ideas, learning from each other and bonding. I look forward to attending these events for years to come.

Today I actually learned a lot of things. I learned how imperialism is related to sexism. We criticized it. I also liked the Langston Hughes poem.

This conference was amazing. I never thought about communism till today and how capitalism affects us every day.

The PLP college conference was excellent in that the students organized, planned, and led the workshops. The student leaders of my workshop were well prepared, articulate, and very enthusiastic. The materials and workshops were well designed. The opening keynote speech was excellent and should be printed. There should be more students! This was the main weakness. I was able to bring only one student. It was not enough.

Excellent organization of the conference! Inspiring leadership, especially to see the development of a new generation of young leaders. One of the strengths of Party events, including this conference, was the practice of collectivity, the valuing of and contribution of experiences from all types of people. Young and old, women and men, black and white and Latino and Asian participants, U.S.-born and immigrant participants, student and faculty — together we were able to go deeper in analyzing experience and the world.

I left here with a new appreciation — a reminder actually — that building close personal ties is political. I also was inspired to see so many young people with such a deep understanding of the contradictions of capitalism and belief in communism.

Correction

The Nov. 13 issue's editorial "Imperialist Rivals, Domestic Foes Rattle Racist U.S. Rulers" on page 2 mentioned racist war criminal David Petraeus taught at City College of New York. While Petraeus is indeed a racist and a war criminal, he did not teach at City College, but at a division of City University of New York, the Macaulay Honors College.

★

In the "Big Bosses Backed Nazi Blitzkrieg and Holocaust" article on page seven, the first paragraph talks about the infliction of blitzkrieg against Czechoslovakia. In fact, the Nazis did not have to wage a blitzkrieg on Czechoslovakia. In the infamous 1938 Munich agreement, the UK and France handed Czechoslovakia over to the Nazis on a silver platter.

As is the case with every Progressive Labor Party event I've attended as a student, every conversation we have is a learning experience and the collaboration between everyone in the Party really gives you hope for a better future. When you look out to the crowd of people at any one of PLP's events you see how we can start to end the horrible discrimination that is present under capitalism. Black, white, Latino, Asian, old young, men and women all working together; egalitarianism is more than possible, I see it every day in the Party and I definitely saw it this past weekend at the New York City College conference.

Learning and participating in conversations about things that effect not only students but ultimately everyone, all of us left with a plan on how we're going to fight against racism, sexism, and militarization when we go back to our schools. As I left the workshops I felt inspired and I knew that we weren't just talking but that we were going to make real change, and really that's the whole point, isn't it?

New faces. Good conversation with lots of struggle. Some older faces still struggling with communist ideas, inching closer to joining the Party. Lot of good questions from people totally new to communism to people who have been thinking about communism for a while. Good responses from a variety of comrades, though some a little too wordy.

Reform is still pervasive. We got to be in it to win it, but winning is communism. Let's sharpen the fight to make revolution primary.

It was an enlivening and inspiring experience. It was great to see many young comrades share not only their anger toward the present system but also their hope/desire to see a new world, a communist world, come into being. It is very easy to get caught up in our own problems; although these problems are not nothing (what with the current crisis of capitalism!). It is great to interact with other working people who share your plight — and your hopes for a future devoid of war, racism, borders, classes, etc. All in all, I am leaving the conference extremely satisfied, and already looking forward to the next one!

It was a good experience to hear different ideas and different viewpoints on racism and sexism. I was glad to learn more about PLP and find out how to fight the system.

The general line of the Party lives in the particular thoughts and actions of our members and our friends. This conference brought me together with many young comrades and many more students just looking into communism and PLP. This was profoundly refreshing and enriching to my own understanding of our line. Our future is in capable hands.


This conference was successful in my point of view. When working in a group of diverse characters, you tend to learn multiple points on a specific subject. Each individual idea comes together to give you a collective understanding and a broader picture. In each workshop, every group member raised arguable questions and provided details to support their case. It was helpful listening and discussing with everyone, in the sense of it providing more information and a clearer understanding of communism and PLP's goals. I would encourage more people to attend every conference!

The Saturday morning opening session included a great poem "The Same," by Langston Hughes, written during his best days of commitment to communism. I was pleased and inspired by the passion and political astuteness of the keynote speech by our Party's leader of college student organizing, a position she should really stick with for at least five more years, preferably ten — to nurture the growth of many more communist campus organizers.

In the workshops, as everywhere, we learn from experience, and some of our first-time workshop leaders will undoubtedly know how to better engage all participants, especially those who are new or shy. We should work harder to win young people and their parents to seeing the importance of building the communist movement because they believe it's important to do so.

Anti-Fascist Fighters Defy College Bosses' Attacks

Continued from front page



Inside the hearing, Taffy and Khalil were offered a deal. They would be readmitted to campus if they renounced political activity and consented to be monitored by the cops. What rubbish! Instead of giving in, they demanded that their comrades be let in for the hearing. These student militants are committed to winning back the student center. Their hearing will now take place in a larger room to accommodate the protesters.

All of us should be out in force on Friday, making our presence known to the school with posters, flags, and chants. Within the reform struggles for the student center and against ROTC, we also need to put communism at the center of the fight. Students have won reforms in the past, but the university later breaks its promises and takes them away. The only lasting victory is to recruit more forces into Progressive Labor Party to fight directly for communism.

Greetings from Haiti

At today's rally, one student read a letter of solidarity from college students in Haiti who also are fighting the militarization of their campuses [see front page]. The crowd cheered. We need to do more to bring an international outlook to our local fights.

Our main weakness is the lack of mass student support on campus. Class consciousness is at a low ebb. While many students took literature and nodded in solidarity, they have yet to see the importance of building an anti-imperialist movement. Universities are sites of struggle. Although the bankers, generals, and politicians may own the school, we can use this space to expose the bosses' war aims and win students to the fight for a communist revolution.☺

Bosses Fight for Share of Iran’s Auto Market

Competition for maximum profits is a law of capitalism. Capitalists fight to gain a profit advantage over their rivals, both within a country and between countries. Ultimately the fight between the two antagonistic classes — workers and bosses — is the main determinant of world events. However, currently — as CHALLENGE has correctly pointed out — due to the weakness of workers’ class struggle, and especially the absence of a mass communist-led working class, inter-imperialist rivalry has governed world affairs.

Inevitably the capitalists settle their differences by going to war, which occurred on a world scale twice between 1914 and 1945. What drives them to war is the competition in the economic sphere, for markets, resources and masses of cheap labor. Economic wars lead inevitably to shooting wars.

Much of this has been reflected in proxy wars in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, as well as in U.S. rulers’ direct invasions (Iraq and Afghanistan), partly to control energy supplies and pipelines. In addition, however, this rivalry is also intensifying in another economic war, specifically in the world’s auto industry.

From the 1980s until 2011, the French automaker Peugeot was selling 455,000 cars per year in Iran, one-third of the country’s auto market, all assembled in Iran from parts shipped by Peugeot from Vesoul, France. Then on June 3, nine days before the Iranian elections, Barack Obama signed an executive order authorizing the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury to take sanctions against any company that furnishes or has already furnished “goods and services” to the “automobile sector in Iran.” This would have a direct effect on Peugeot. However, Obama’s decree was careful not to forbid delivery to Iran of completely built cars, opening the market to General Motors and other U.S. automakers through their foreign subsidiaries. Since June auto manufacturers have been anticipating this opening of the Iranian market, estimated at 1,500,000 cars a year.

Meanwhile, Korean manufacturer Daewoo is pre-

paring to be the star at Teheran’s auto show this month. And guess who holds a 47 percent stake in Daewoo? None other than GM. After Obama moved to bail out GM from bankruptcy, he now helps GM in its profit war with its rivals.

But how does this attempt by GM to sell cars in Iran square with the ongoing fight between the U.S. and Iran over the latter’s nuclear ambitions, which seemingly has been leading to military confrontation? Such a war would certainly damage GM’s ability to enter the Iranian auto market. A potential resolution to this contradiction could result from what appears to be a new outlook within the U.S. ruling class on what to do about Iran.

On November 4, the New York Times — chief mouthpiece of the main financial wing of the U.S. ruling class — published three items which seemed to fly in the face of the idea that war with Iran is inevitable and might be prompting the attempt of U.S. automakers to win a goodly share of Iran’s auto market.

An editorial — “Congress Can Help on Iran” — made the case that the situation is moving towards “a broader rapprochement” between Iran and the West and therefore this is not the time for Congress to impose even stricter sanctions on Iran because they “could sabotage the best opportunity in years for a peaceful resolution” of a nuclear agreement.

The second item was an op-ed piece entitled, “Talk to Iran, It Works” by Ryan Crocker, former U.S. ambassador to Iraq and Afghanistan and dean of the Bush School of Government at Texas A & M. He maintains that “talks with Iran have succeeded before and they can succeed again.” He then reviews the two ruling classes’ cooperation right after 9/11 when Iran gave “extremely valuable” information “showing the Taliban’s troop strength and positions just before American military action began,” an invasion of which Iran was “a strong proponent.” Ambassador Crocker says he “made agreements on various security issues” with Iran but the cooperation ended when Bush gave his “axis of evil” speech in early 2002,

indicting Iran, Iraq and N. Korea.

The third article — headlined “Iran’s Top Leader and U.S. Counter Criticism of Talks” — reported on current nuclear talks with Iran in Geneva. Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei, while pessimistic on an agreement, nevertheless “moved to quiet hard-liners in his country by expressing support for his negotiating team” when the diplomatic initiative had been attacked by “conservative clerics and military commanders.”

Now all this doesn’t necessarily mean that there will be an agreement and that there won’t be a U.S. military clash with Iran, but it also seems to indicate that there are sentiments in the U.S. ruling class that might want such an agreement. This would certainly coincide with Obama’s actions to help GM and other U.S. automakers reap a profit harvest from Iran’s potential 1,500,000 auto sales.

However, France has now held up an agreement in an attempt to lead Mideast countries opposed to Iran — Israel, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. France has signed lucrative contracts with the latter two, including a \$5 billion contract containing delivery of ground-to-air missiles to the Saudis and aircraft to Qatar. (Their position has been supported by U.S. right-wingers John McCain and the Wall Street Journal who proclaim “Vive la France.”)

So French rulers’ hold-up of an agreement with Iran may indicate a willingness to sacrifice some of Peugeot’s profits in Iran in exchange for becoming a leading arms supplier in the Mideast.

With negotiations over Iran’s nuclear ambitions in the background, the fight over its auto market becomes another factor in what happens among these competing capitalists. Of course, the exploitation of the auto-workers who produce the cars is what enables these bosses to engage in these auto wars. It is only class war between the workers and these bosses that can lead to a revolution dumping the exploiters.☺

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

Big brands profit from labor misery

NYT, 11/5 — Factories in Bangladesh, the world’s second leading apparel exporter after China, keep costs down by paying garment workers the lowest wages in the world — the current minimum is...\$38 a month....

Bangladesh’s garment industry has faced growing international pressure to improve worker safety and wages, especially since the collapse of the Rana Plaza factory building in April, which killed more than 1,100 garment workers....

Multinational brands push hard to keep costs down, even as they promise consumers that their clothes are made in safe, well-run factories....

But most American brands, including Walmart and Gap...have...pursued an approach that does not oblige them to help finance safety improvements.

Bangladesh’s economy is heavily dependent on the garment industry for jobs and foreign exchange earnings. Factory owners say that to remain competitive they must keep wages from rising too high....

Protests over unpaid or low wages have become common, and labor leaders say the proposed \$68-a-month minimum is still not enough to allow workers to meet their basic needs.

A recent study by the Bangladesh Institute of Labor Studies found workers needed at least \$100 a month to cover bare necessities.

Drone strikes outrage Pakistanis

NYT, 11/5 — The ruling party in a northwestern province of Pakistan voted Monday to block NATO supply lines...unless the United States stops its drone strikes in the nearby belt....

The United States, having weathered years of Pakistani criticism over the drone campaign, is unlikely to accede to demands.

U.S. uses docs to torture prisoners

NYT, 11/5 — A group of experts in medicine, law

and ethics has issued a blistering report that accuses the United States government of directing doctors, nurses and psychologists, among others, to ignore their professional codes of ethics and participate in the abuse of detainees in Afghanistan, Iraq and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba....

Among the abuses cited...are doctors’ force-feeding of hunger strikers by pushing feeding tubes into their noses and down their throats. The task force also suggested that medical personnel ignored their duty to report evidence of beatings or torture of detainees.

The Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Department dismissed the new report as unsubstantiated and incorrect....

A C.I.A. spokesman said... “The agency is proud of its medical staff, who uphold the highest standards of their profession in the work they perform.”

...The C.I.A.’s Office of Medical Services’...guidelines...called for medical personnel to be present during interrogations to ensure that no “serious or permanent harm” resulted. For instance, exposure to cold was stopped just before hypothermia was likely to set in, and loud noise was to be halted just before permanent hearing damage would occur....

Dr. Reisner,...president of Psychologists for Social Responsibilities [said]...“We’d like to see the [American Psychological] Association acknowledge what is already widely known about psychologists’ participation in interrogations, and use those as examples of what psychologists cannot and should not do.”

Ignoring real needs, U.S. funds snoops

NYT, 11/5 — To the Editor:

Re “No Morsel Too Miniscule for All-Consuming N.S.A....

So we have become a paranoid surveillance state.

Unable to educate millions of children adequately, unable to provide health care for millions of adults, with infrastructure crumbling and a moribund economy, we nonetheless spend immense sums on an ever-growing spying industry that seems as hungry for information about American citizens...as threats from abroad....



Subtle racism is still racism

NYT, 11/3 — To the Editor:....

...Quiet racism occupies a comfortable part of American culture.

An academic search committee decides not to hire a minority candidate because “he may not be a good fit” or “she may not reach our students....” A white police officer must...decide to make an arrest, issue a summons or not. These examples and thousands like them, far beyond public view, perpetuate racism and entrench it in our culture....

Raymond D’Angelo

Bolshevik Revolution: Shining Light for World's Workers



November 7, 2013, was the 96th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. We should all celebrate it. That day the working class seized state power and kept it for decades. The Bolsheviks re-established the Communist International, or Comintern, which led the fight for freedom from imperialism and colonialism all over the world.

Where it did not lead this fight, the Bolshevik Revolution inspired and aided those who did. It became the greatest force for liberation in world history. Workers throughout the world fought for and won social welfare benefits because their own struggles were inspired by the successes of the Bolsheviks in taking and holding state power. Capitalists worldwide yielded reforms to try to prevent workers from leading revolutions to overthrow the profit system altogether!

The Comintern led the world in fighting racism and sexism. It inspired the greatest works of 20th century art. It opposed religious obscurantism (the deliberate withholding of knowledge). The communist movement led the fight against fascism everywhere. Fascism — the ideology of capitalism in crisis — killed tens, even hundreds of millions, but in the last analysis was no match for the communist movement. The Soviets destroyed Nazism virtually by themselves. For tens of millions of working people, intellectuals, students and others, the

title “communist” became the proudest badge of honor. No movement in world history is so rich with lessons, both positive and negative, for the international working class to study and learn from, in order to do it better next time.

The Comintern and world communist movement ultimately turned into their opposites. They reverted to capitalism. This happened because of internal weaknesses, contradictions and errors. It also happened because the Bolsheviks were the first! Their mistakes occurred because they were “blazing the trail,” trying to build communism when it had never been done before. Major errors were inevitable. Errors are part of the process of learning how to build a new world. We can, must and will learn from them.

Ever since 1917, the capitalists have promoted a huge flood of lies about the communist movement. They lie particularly about Joseph Stalin, who led the Bolshevik Party from the late 1920s until his death in 1953. Leon Trotsky invented

many of these falsehoods. Little that Trotsky wrote during the 1930s about the USSR was true. Most of it was conscious falsehoods; Trotsky knew he was lying. This was convenient for him and also for the capitalists.

We need to be “critically critical.” It is a huge error to simply believe horror stories about the communist movement, Stalin, the Comintern and the Bolshevik Party. The Bolsheviks did the main thing RIGHT! They dared to seize power from the capitalists and dared to fight hard and successfully to hold onto it. We are, and should be, inspired by them. We stand on the shoulders of giants, the Bolsheviks, who led the first successful working-class communist revolution 96 years ago. “Standing on the shoulders of giants” means that we can — or ought to be able to — see further than they could. That means learning from their errors, as well as from their successes. That’s our task. Let’s get to it!✊

PL College Conference Youth Welcome ‘Rising Flames’ of Communist Ideas

BROOKLYN, November 9 — In 1968, guitar virtuoso and songwriter Jimi Hendrix wrote the line, “Look at the sky turn hellfire red...” He was referring to the rising flames of black workers’ rebellions in major U.S. cities after nonviolent struggle seemed futile.

In 2013, his words could easily describe the revolutionary excitement felt at the two-day Progressive Labor Party College Conference to Smash Imperialism. Some participants came from the rally against the repression of student fighters [see front page] and greeted communist ideas and practices as a welcome alternative to the fascism we experience daily on campus.

Creeping Fascism and International Fightback

The conference, 60 people strong, boasted a multi-racial crowd from across the U.S., along with others from as far away as Mexico and Switzerland. It was an important step toward building an alliance of students, professors and college workers. It strengthened a new leadership of PL youth while rejuvenating the fighting spirits of more veteran comrades.

The conference took place as attacks on students and faculty have sharpened. From Haiti to Los Angeles to New York City, college campuses are becoming breeding grounds for fascism. This is a period when U.S. bosses, in preparation for war with inter-imperialist rivals like China, can no longer rule in the old way. In their desperate effort to hold on to state power, they must intensify their repression of students and workers. The City

University of New York’s reinstallation of the Reserve Officer Training Corps, integrating generals Colin Powell and David Petraeus into the curriculum, is one sign of creeping fascism. Another is the shutdown of student centers, a move that hinders student organizing [see CHALLENGE 11/13].

Many students involved in fightbacks are wondering, Why is this happening now? Another crucial question: Is communism possible? Our conference was a positive move to build confidence in the working class that we can indeed win. Moreover, the workshops used the Marxist method of dialectical materialism to investigate how capitalism is headed not only toward war but also toward its own inevitable decay and death.

Students Passionate About Communism

Many were passionate in opposing racism, sexism, nationalism and other divisions among working people. In workshops and larger gatherings, students demonstrated a serious desire for a renewed movement to change the dark future capitalism has in store for them [see page 6].

A keynote speech by a student leader of the PLP college work reflected the revolutionary optimism mood shared by many. “Capitalism is a system that’s dying and the working class has glimmers of hope. The glimmers are happening in this very room. There are glimmers of hope when we fight back, when we choose the side of communism. We will win! Choose communist revolu-

tion and raise that blood-red flag high. Never let it come down!”

In one workshop, a young woman student talked about the role of universities under capitalism. She said she felt targeted by her right-wing professor for openly challenging his backward ideas in class. By the end of the day, she said the conference gave her confidence she wasn’t alone, and that PLP has her back in the struggle against anti-working-class ideas. This student was a shining example of an engaged, vocal and focused thinker, the opposite of the media caricature of apathetic youth.

Comrades from Haiti drafted a sharp solidarity letter about an incident four days earlier, when students faced “hundreds of tear gas canisters...fired by the State Police, and students were passing out around us as rubber bullets as well as live bullets rained down on us.”

The conference promoted a discussion on the importance and use of CHALLENGE in our fightbacks. We expect more students to write for, read, and distribute our revolutionary paper.

The college conference is one step in a long fight against imperialism. We must bring our revolutionary optimism back to our campuses, be they in Switzerland or Indiana. If we do our jobs, the bosses will have a bigger problem than the threats to their control over their oil resources. They’ll be up against an organized, international working class.✊



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